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DISPLACED PERSONS AND
HUMANITARIAN QUESTIONS
HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTIONS

SECURITY COUNCIL
Forty-ninth year

Letter dated 15 February 1994 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of Gabon to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit to you, herewith, the text of a communiqué from the Gabonese Government concerning the deaths of 67 illegal immigrants on 3 February 1994 in a barracks of the national gendarmerie in Libreville (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the text of this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly under items 100, 103 and 104 of the preliminary list, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Emmanuel MBA ALLO
Deputy Permanent Representative
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

* A/49/50.

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ANNEX

Communiqué issued by the Government of Gabon on 4 February 1994

On Thursday, 3 February 1994, 67 illegal immigrants of various nationalities died in a barracks of the national gendarmerie in Libreville.

This tragedy, which shook the people and Government of Gabon, is due to the following phenomena:

(1) The extent of the migratory flow between the countries of the Gulf of Guinea and Gabon;

(2) The lack of facilities for accommodating immigrants before they are returned to the countries from which they came.

For Gabon, the tradition of African hospitality is not just a convenient slogan, and, until recently, Gabon welcomed the arrival on its soil of men and women from all continents:

18 January 1994	24 immigrants
27 January 1994	39 immigrants
28 January 1994	50 immigrants
1 February 1994	28 immigrants
2 February 1994	85 immigrants

This policy now conflicts with the demands of the country's current difficult economic situation.

In that context we have repeatedly pointed out to the authorities of the countries from which these immigrants come that the flow of people leaving their territory must be stemmed or regulated by means of an information campaign and by making them aware of the risks involved in illegal immigration.

The Gabonese Government should like to recall here the action it has embarked on in close collaboration with the countries from which these illegal immigrants come, in particular by exchanging special missions in order to work out the terms on which the immigrants will return.

It is in that context that many illegal immigrants from Nigeria and Mali have been able to return to their countries. To date, the international inquiry conducted by the Gabonese authorities has not yet determined the responsibilities of the various persons involved.

However, it is worth pointing out that individuals or groups of individuals play a leading role in the continuing flow of illegal immigrants into Gabon.

The considerable financial payments involved is what keeps this hateful traffic alive.

Accordingly, Gabon, anxious to preserve its ties with other African countries and the well-being of peoples, is requesting the assistance of friendly countries and international and non-governmental organizations in order to eradicate this scourge.